

Socialism, it was to the broader and more generous ideas of Charles Fourier that he finally inclined, striving to adapt them to the needs of a new century. It is certain that some of his suggestions remained nebulous, that several were not strictly practical, but it should be remembered that at the outset of "Les Quatre Evangiles" he had announced that the series would form a kind of "poem in prose, divided into four chants." It would be unfair to neglect that statement, for it shows he did not intend "F6condit4" and "Travail" to be taken as severely practical works. They partook, as one has said, of a constructive character—as opposed to Zola's earlier and purely destructive writings — "but they were not intended to be the final plans of an architect or an engineer, or the ultimate provisions of a new code. They were the roughest of sketches, so to say, suggestions which here and there might be found useful by those who might have to solve the problems which they reviewed. And it must be at least admitted that their tendency was good. In "F6condit4" it was most healthful; in "Travail" it was most pacific and calming, Zola's manifest intention being to quiet the angry passions of the hour, to direct Labour towards peaceable courses in its quest for the fulfilment of its aspirations. Such books cannot be judged as one would judge ordinary novels. They were, to a certain point, drafted in the form of novels in order that they might reach

the great
majority; "but Zola, with superb disdain, now
cast many of
the rules and conventions of novel-writing aside.
After th&
publication of " Travail," Vizetelly sent him
word that the
English translation had been regarded less as
a work of
fiction than as a combination of sermon and
pamphlet,
to which the reviewers and the public did
not seem to